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LETTER DATED 18 FEBRUARY 1997 FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to refer to the mission of the joint United Nations/Organization of African Unity Special Representative for the Great Lakes region, Mr. Mohammed Sahnoun, who is currently in Kinshasa.

Mr. Sahnoun is at present working on a five-point peace plan, which is based on your statement (S/PRST/1997/5) of 7 February 1997 and which he hopes will be accepted by all parties.

The points are as follows:

(1) immediate cessation of hostilities;

(2) withdrawal of all external forces, including mercenaries;

(3) reaffirmation of respect for the national sovereignty and the territorial integrity of Zaire and other States of the Great Lakes region;

(4) protection and security for all refugees and displaced persons and facilitation of access to humanitarian assistance;

(5) rapid and peaceful settlement of the crisis through dialogue, the electoral process and the convening of an international conference on peace, security and development in the Great Lakes region.

As you know, numerous initiatives are currently under way to restore peace in eastern Zaire. The Foreign Ministers of Kenya, South Africa and Tanzania are in Kinshasa. The Foreign Ministers of Cameroon, Congo and Zimbabwe are arriving there today, as is the Secretary-General of the OAU, Mr. Salim Salim.

It would greatly assist the efforts of the joint United Nations/Organization of African Unity Special Representative if consideration were to be given by the Security Council, on an urgent basis, to an appropriate acknowledgement and support of his initiative.

I should be grateful if you could bring this letter to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(Signed) Kofi ANNAN

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